

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6254

C 322 L 02
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating the fruit and vegetable inspection account.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture & International Trade (originally sponsored by Senators Rasmussen, Swecker, Shin and Spanel; by request of Department of Agriculture).

Senate Committee on Agriculture & International Trade
House Committee on Agriculture & Ecology

Background: There is a system for the inspection of specified unprocessed fruits and vegetables to determine whether they meet uniform grades and standards used in domestic and international sales.

There are currently three fruit and vegetable inspection districts that are created for specified geographic areas in the state. Fees collected by each district are currently to be deposited into a separate fund in a bank located in the district. Each of the three districts are supervised by the commodity inspection program within the Department of Agriculture.

The department also maintains a fruit and vegetable inspection trust account. This account is authorized to be used to: (1) pay expenses involved with inspection agreements with the United States Department of Agriculture; (2) assist other fruit and vegetable inspection districts in temporary financial distress which are to be repaid; and (3) to pay necessary administrative costs of the commodity inspection division of the Department of Agriculture. The source of the funds in this trust account is the local fruit and vegetable inspection funds.

Interest earnings that accrue on balances of specified accounts in the custody of the State Treasurer, such as the agricultural local fund, are to be distributed to those accounts.

Summary: The fruit and vegetable inspection account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. All fees collected by fruit and vegetable inspection districts must be deposited in the account. An account is maintained for each district. The account may be used solely for implementation and enforcement of the fruit and vegetable inspection law or other expenditures authorized by statute or session law. The account is subject to state allotment procedures but an appropriation is not required. Formulas are set to temporarily reduce fees based on fund balances as three districts are being consolidated into two.

The fruit and vegetable inspection trust account is repealed. Authority for separate bank accounts for each district is also repealed.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	43	3
House	93	0 (House amended)

Senate 41 1 (Senate concurred)

Effective: July 1, 2002